(b) whether the Sapphire is being extracted stealthily from the mines for the last thirty years unabatedly, owing to negligence of Government;

(c) whether the Sapphire mines are located in inaccessible Padar area of Doda in Jammu Division;

(d) whether 21,638 gms of Sapphire has been auctioned recently;

(e) the quantity of Sapphire extracted by Jammu Kashmir Minerals Ltd. during the last nine years from these mines; and

(f) the decision taken to take effective steps in order to prevent theft of Sapphire?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Yes, Sir. Some of the famous royal blue and green varieties of Sapphire were obtained in Padar deposits in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir in the past.

(b) The information pertaining to the illegal extraction of Sapphire comes under the purview of the State Government.

(c) Yes, Sir. Sapphire mines are located in the inaccessible Padar area of Doda district, Jammu.

(d) to (f) The information comes under the purview of the State Government and the Ministry of Mines does not maintain this information.

National Mineral Policy, 2008

2874. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cabinet has given its approval for the National Mineral Policy, 2008;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Policy;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering opening up the mining schemes to attract more FDI and if so, the estimated inflow of FDI for the mineral sector;

(d) whether Government has accepted the Hoda Commission report *in toto*, before finalizing the Policy; and

(e) which State would be benefited by this new Policy?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The new National Mineral Policy has enunicated policy measures like assured right to next mineral concession, transferability of mineral concessions and transparency in allotment of concessions, in order to reduce delays which are seen as impediments to investment and technology flow in the mining sector in India. The Mining Policy also seeks to develop a sustainable framework for optimum utilization of the country's natural minerals resources for the industrial growth in the country and at the same time improving the life of people living in the mining areas, which are generally located in the backward and tribal regions of the country. The new National Mineral Policy, 2008 is available on the website of Ministry of Mines (http://mines.nic.in)

(c) The new Policy envisages for simplifying the procedures to reduce delay in grant of mineral concession in order to attract investment including FDI into mining sector. FDI of about $ 250 crore per annum is expected in the mining sector from the 5th year of implementation of the new National Mineral Policy.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The entire country would be benefited by this new Policy.

Mines in Tamil Nadu

2875. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the mines excavated in Tamil Nadu for various minerals;

(b) whether there are more potential reserves of minerals in the State, which are yet to be mines and exploited; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) As per available information, there were 160 mines in Tamil Nadu for non-fuel and non-coal minerals (excluding minor minerals) in the year 2006-07.

(b) and (c) As per available information, Tamil Nadu has potential reserves of Molybdenum (1500000 tones) which are yet to be mined and exploited. Mining of minerals depends on economic viability and demand of the market.

Action Plan for Development of Muslim Artisans

2876. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently formulated any action plan for the development of muslim artisans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount sanctioned under the plan; and

(d) the progress made, so far, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a) to (d) An Inter-Ministerial Group has been constituted to plan and monitor the implementation of a comprehensive programme for skill and entrepreneurship development amongst muslim artisans. The question of sanctioning funds would arise only when the plan is finalized.

Loan by NMDFC to minorities

2877. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the share capital of the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC);

(b) the amount of loan provided by NMDFC to minorities during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the rate of interest of this loan; and

(d) the amount and the names of those individuals who were given loan during that period?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a) The authorized share capital of National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) is Rs. 750.00 crores, the paid up capital is Rs. 555.921 crores.